The Maryland Fruit Grower

September, 1935

Maryland State
Horticultural Society

FERTILIZE YOUR FRUIT TREES .. THIS FALL

with Granular 'Aero' Cyanamid

GET THE JOB OUT OF THE WAY OF SPRING WORK

Even though the top is dormant —

THE ROOTS ARE STORING UP NITROGEN AND OTHER PLANT FOODS FOR NEXT YEAR'S USE

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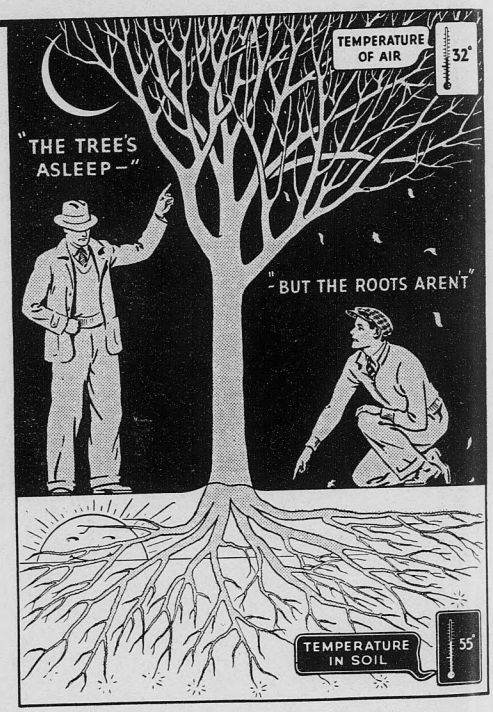
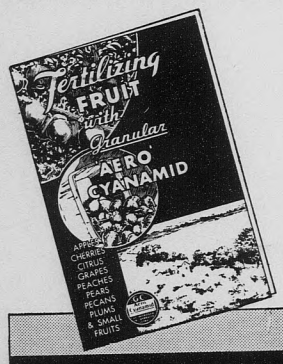
FALL-FERTILIZED TREES ARE LESS SUBJECT TO INJURY FROM SPRING FREEZES





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Send for Leaflet F100 on fall fertilization and our regular fruit Leaflet X307.

AMERICAN CYANAMID COMPANY

ATLANTA, GA. **NEW YORK, N. Y.**

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Edited by the Secretary, A. F. Vierheller, Extension Horticulturist

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THE APPLE SITUATION

In these days of readjustment, crop control, future plans and prospects, what does the apple industry have ahead of it? Mr. M. R. Cooper of the U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics, discussing the apple situation before a conference of Northeastern States agricultural representatives said in part:

The year 1887 marked the beginning of commercial apple production as we know it today. By 1912 production was so heavy that millions of bushels of apples rotted in the orchards. From that year to the present time, economic factors have been forcing adjustments in the apple industry. Tree numbers and production have declined. Many farm orchards and unprofitable commercial orchards have been neglected or removed; trees of more popular varieties have replaced many trees of unpopular varieties; and, on the whole, there has been a decided shift from farm to commercial orchards with better location.

These adjustments occurred throughout the apple producing regions of the United States. They have reduced the number of all apple trees in the country to about one-half of the number reported in 1910; and have reduced production to 75 per cent of what it was during the peak period, 1911-15. These adjustments have resulted in heavy losses to many growers, but they have also resulted in placing the apple industry on a much sounder economic basis than at any time in many years. They have scaled down the producing capacity of the industry to about 160,000,000 bushels a year, compared with average production of 216,000,000 bushels during the 5-year period, 1911-15, when production was at its peak.

Neglect of many orchards as a result of the depression, drought, and winter injury have taken their toll of the apple industry during the last 5 years; and largely because of those unusual conditions, production has averaged about 10,000,000 bushels, or 6 per cent less than the average for the previous 5 years. With normal growing and business conditions the apple industry may, in a short time, regain a substantial part of the decrease in production during the last 5 years.

Eastern States. During the last 5 years, 1930-34, the Eastern States—which include the New England, the Middle Atlantic and the South Atlantic States—produced about 28,500,000 bushels of apples per year, or 25 per cent of the total United States crop. Production during these 5 years was only 2 per cent less than the average for the previous 5 years.

At the beginning of the present depression the apple industry of this region was better equipped for economical production of fruit than at any time in many years. Many unproductive orchards has been removed and those that remained were generally cared for in a business-like way. The region, as a whole contained a large proportion of trees of desirable varieties that had not come into full bearing. During the depression years, orchards that were not generally profitable have received less than average care, but partly because of nearness to large consuming centers, many growers have been able to keep their orchards in fair to good condition.

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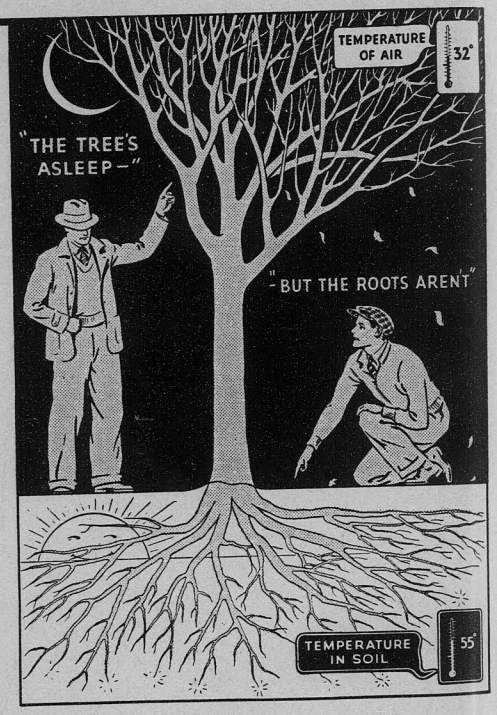

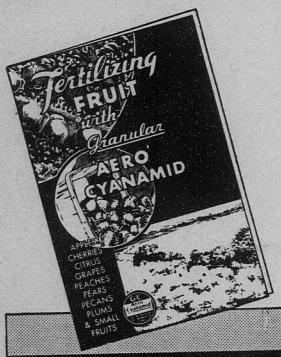

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The unusual freeze during the winter of 1933-34, killed or injured so badly that they are expected to die, at least 2,500,000 trees in the Eastern States, and severely injured many more. The number of trees of bearing age that were reported as killed amounted to 17.4 per cent of the total number of bearing trees in New York on January 1, 1933. Only 4.4 per cent of the number of non-bearing trees as of that date were reported as killed. In addition 26.3 per cent of the number of trees of bearing age in New York, and 12.7 per cent of the number of non-bearing age, were reported as injured by the cold winter.

In New England the apple industry also suffered injury from the cold winter of 1933-34. An inquiry made in July 1934 indicated at that time that the percentage of apple trees that were killed, or were expected to die as a result of the freeze were as follows: Maine, 44 per cent of the total; New Hampshire, 13 per cent; Vermont, 10 per cent; Massachusetts 4 per cent; Rhode Island, 7 per cent; Connecticut, 6 per cent. Baldwin trees, the most extensively planted variety in New England, were most seriously affected.

Altogether, trees that were killed by the freeze have probably reduced the future potential bearing capacity of orchards in the Eastern States by 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 bushels per year, or 10 to 12 per cent of average production in the United States during the same period. However, the decrease may be considerably larger because of injury to many trees that were not dead at the time of the surveys. From a longer viewpoint, the potential bearing capacity of orchards in the region may decline still further, since a relatively large part of the trees are nearing full bearing capacity. Because of the heavy mortality of Baldwin trees during the cold winter of 1933-34, supplies of this variety will be exceptionally low, at least for many years.

Central States. Production of apples in the Central States averaged about 58,000,000 bushels per year during the last 5 years, 1930-34, which was about 39 per cent of the total United States crop. This was 11 per cent less than average production during the previous 5 years. A part of this decrease was caused by unfavorable weather conditions, and a part by curtailed production expenditures and further deterioration of farm orchards. The region as a whole is subject to frequent frosts and freezes, but permanent damage from these causes during the last 5 years has not been excessive for the region as a whole.

Many of the trees now in the orchards in the Central States were planted since the World War. Consequently, a relatively large part of the trees are young. The newer orchards as a whole are more favorably located than were many of the early plantings. With average weather conditions, commercial production for the region as a whole can be maintained, and probably increased, with moderate annual plantings. This region contains a great many farm orchards however that are being allowed to deteriorate rapidly. This tendency, which probably will continue, may at least offset any increased production from commercial orchards until prices of apples again become attractive.

Western States. During the last 5 years, 1930-34, the 11 Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain States produced 54,000,000 bushels of apples per year, or 36 per cent of the United States total. They produce a higher proportion, about 45 per cent, of the commercial crop of the country. Low prices for apples have increased the difficulty of Western growers in marketing, since a large part of the crop is shipped to distant markets. Notwithstanding diffi-

culties encountered, production in these states during the last 5 years has averaged only 3.5 per cent less than during the previous 5-year period.

In Washington, production of the Winesap has probably reached a stationary level; production of Delicious will continue to increase for several years; and production of Rome Beauty is expected to show a slight increase. Production of Jonathan, Stayman Winesap, and Spitzenburg is declining. In California, production of early apples is expected to increase, and production of late apples probably will continue to decline at a slow rate. In Oregon, production probably will tend downward during the next several years. In the Mountain States, as a whole, production is expected to decline.

In the 11 Western States as a whole, a relatively small percentage of the trees are yet to come into bearing, and a relatively large percentage have reached, or soon will reach, full bearing capacity. Under average growing conditions the trend of production may be slightly downward during the next several years.

For the country as a whole, a relatively large number of trees now in orchards were set during the period 1905-12. A large proportion of these trees have reached maximum bearing capacity, and it is probable that production from this body to trees will begin to decline about 1945. Tending to offset this decline is production from another relatively important body of trees planted soon after the World War, which will be close to maximum bearing capacity about 10 years from now. Increased production from this younger group of trees probably will not quite offset production from the older group 10 years from now, considering tree removals and plantings of the last 5 or 6 years.

Production of apples during the next 5 years probably will equal, and may exceed the somewhat lower-than-average production of the last 5 years. However, because of recent excessive damage from drought and cold weather, and continued heavy deterioration and removal of farm and generally unprofitable commercial orchards, accompanied by very little planting of trees during the last 5 years, moderate replacements and plantings will be necessary to maintain the present volume of production 10 to 15 years from now.

A relatively large proportion of production during the next several years will be composed of Delicious, Winesap, Jonathan, Stayman Winesap, Rome Beauty, McIntosh and Grimes Golden. According to a tree survey (as of 1928) about 43 per cent of all trees in commercial apple orchards were of these varieties, and a relatively large proportion of the trees of these varieties were young.

Export Markets. The ability of producers to market at a profit the indicated production during the next several years will depend to considerable extent upon foreign outlets. These outlets are highly important to the welfare of producers of apples. For example, in the seasons, 1928-29 to 1932-33, exports of apples have averaged 17 per cent of the commercial apple crop of the United States. Exports of United States apples go chiefly to United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands. During the same 5 seasons the United Kingdom took 44 per cent, Germany 17 per cent, and the Netherlands 11 per cent of total apple exports from this country.

Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland and New York are the most important Eastern exporting states. It is evident that apple exporters may expect keener competition in foreign markets. Fruit growing has been fostered in many countries as a result of nationalistic policies and economic

conditions. Practically all apple-producing countries have made some progress in improving yields and quality.

Competition From Other Fruits. Another factor that may affect the disposal of future apple crops is the general fruit situation. Production of fruits in general probably will continue to expand, as present non-bearing arreage comes into bearing and as young acreage now in production increases in producing capacity. This is particularly true of citrus production, and to a lesser extent of cherries, pears, and grapes. During the last 7 years production of citrus has increased more than 50 per cent.

Pear production has increased substantially for the last 30 years, and probably will continue to increase for several years. The number of cherry trees now in orchards, and their condition and age, are sufficient to maintain the upward trend in production for at least another 5 years. As to grapes, there is already planted in the country as a whole ample acreage of wine, raisin and table varieties to take care of any increase in demand that is likely to take place in the next 5 years.

Utilization of Apple Crop. Approximately three-fifths of the apple production in the United States is sold for consumption as fresh fruit. Large quantities of the balance are used for drying, canning, and for cider and vinegar. Roughly, about 25,000,000 to 35,000,000 bushels or 20 per cent of the total crop are used annually for these purposes.

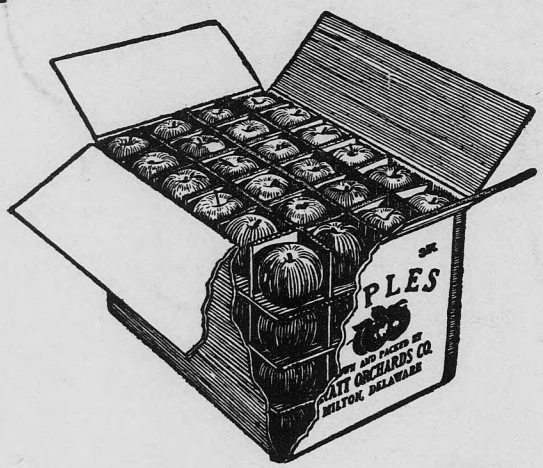
The dried apple output has not changed greatly in volume since 1909. About 80 per cent of our commercial dried apples are exported, mainly to Germany, Netherlands, France and Sweden. Between 6,000,000 and 7,000,000 bushels of fresh apples, or 4 per cent of the total crop, are used annually for drying, and 74 per cent of the volume is dried in the Western States. New York is the principal Eastern State in which apples are dried commercially.

According to the 1930 census, sales of canned apples amounted to 3,600,000 cases of various size cans. About 5,000,000 bushels of fresh apples were required to can this quantity, and about one-half of these were grown in the Western States. Another 1,000,000 bushels were used for canned apple sauce, most of which was manufactured in the Eastern States. About 10 per cent of the commercial canned apples and sauce were exported, mainly to the United Kingdom. The commercial canned apple industry has expanded markedly during the last 7 or 8 years. The product has been improved, and is now used extensively by bakers, restaurants and hotels. Commercial canning offers an important outlet for the lower grades of late apples, but this product is believed to be a strong competitor of early apples for sale as fresh fruit.

The consumption of cider and vinegar in the United States has been estimated by some manufacturers at approximately 60,000,000 gallons a year. It probably requires about 16,000,000 bushels of apples to produce this quantity. These are usually culls and low grade fruit.

Conclusions. From a production viewpoint the apple industry of the United States is now on a much sounder basis than it has been in many years. Looking further ahead about all that can be said at this time is that the export situation is uncertain. With respect to competing fruits, such competition must be expected. Certainly, the eastern grower has one decided advantage under present conditions, and that is nearby markets.

"Apple-cell"



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